NEWS RELEASE

AIR FORCE SPACE COMMAND

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SPACE COMMAND BRINGS KOSOVO LESSONS INTO JEFX '99

Peterson AFB, Colo. -- Air Force Space Command will bring valuable lessons learned from Operation Allied Force into the two-week Joint Expeditionary Force Experiment, scheduled for Aug 18 at various locations nationwide.

JEFX '99 is the second in a series of Air Force experiments that examines advanced technologies and new operational concepts to determine how the military will operate in the 21st century.

The experiment includes live and simulated flying operations and related military activities designed to add realism to stress-filled combat-like environments. All live-fly operations will occur at Nellis AFB, Nev.

The "crisis" scenario for this year involves a simulated attack by a border rogue nation against one of America's overseas allies. At the request of the embattled nation, the United States sends an aerospace expeditionary force to counter the attack. The 366th Wing from Mountain Home AFB, Idaho, forms the core of the Aerospace Expeditionary Force needed for the response. As part of the exercise, Mountain Home must prepare aircraft and personnel for deployment and coordinate with Eglin AFB's 53rd Wing, the core wing for an already in-place AEF.

The lessons Air Force Space Command learned will be of great help to this year's experiment.

"We had our (Space) people directly integrated into Combined Air Operations Center operations during Kosovo, said Col. Larry D. James, 14th AF Director of Operations, Vandenberg

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AFB, Calif. "We supported the air operations center with global positioning navigation, weather information, surveillance from orbiting satellites and with situational awareness tools for the combat crews."

According to James, AFSPC ensured the best Global Positioning System capabilities for GPS-aided munitions -- as well as the other systems dependent on GPS -- was available to the warfighters and planners.

Accurate weather information for aircrews and planners was another element of the support Space assets provided the commanders and crews during operations in Kosovo.

"Obviously weather information in-theater was important. We ensured the best possible weather coverage, satellite overhead imagery for their mission planners and mission operators," James continued.

"We also supported the B-1s and the B-52s that were flying out of England by providing them with the Multi-Source Tactical System and Combat Track system -- tools that gave them real time en route planning capability along with the latest intelligence information," he said.

AFSPC will bring that expertise and experience into the 1999 JEFX experiment this fall.

One of the main objectives of the experiment will be to test "reach back" capabilities, the ability to support contingency operations anywhere in the world from the continental United States, from a command and control perspective using space-based assets, said James.

Along with reach back, AFSPC will explore how best to integrate the Air Tasking Order used to task Military aircraft during a contingency with their Space Tasking Order during JEFX '99.

"We're working to ensure that the STO that we put out on a daily basis is properly formatted and able to be integrated into the experiment's ATO," he said.

Finally, AFSPC will have a senior officer (colonel level) on the Combined Forces Air Component Commander's staff during JEFX 99 according to James.

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“It worked very well (in Kosovo), having someone on the senior staff who truly understood space operations and the support space gives to the warfighter,” he continued. “I believe there is synergy in that.”

One of the lessons learned from operations like Kosovo, according to Maj. Russ Smith, the experiment project officer for JEFX ‘99, is that space systems capabilities are crucial to ensuring the success of AEFs as it relates to the overall Expeditionary Aerospace Force.

“In fact, without space the EAF cannot occur. The simplest example is communications. Without satellite communications to enable the en route updates to the CFACC and the en route reprogramming -- or actual programming -- of a weapons platform, the EAF just cannot occur. Period,” he said.

“Space Command understands the power of space systems, but we’ve got to educate the rest of the world,” Smith said. “What’s in it for the rest of the Air Force is that they get to see a whole new tool box of what’s out there. “That’s the beauty of JEFX. It’s instituting a cultural shift.”

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